



Welwitschia

NamCareerService by welwitschia.org

- HOW TO WRITE A CV -

A What is a CV?

A Curriculum Vitae is an outline of a person's educational and professional history, usually prepared for job or internship applications. A CV is the most flexible and convenient way to make applications. It conveys your personal details in the way that presents you in the best possible light. A CV is a marketing document in which you are marketing something: yourself! You need to "sell" your skills, abilities, qualifications and experience to employers.

There is not just "one best way" to construct a CV – it is your document and can be structured as you wish within the basic framework below.

B Basic Framework of a CV

The first page of a CV should always be a cover page. This should include the words "Curriculum Vitae of [Full Name]". This page should look professional, and we normally recommend centring this text on the middle of the page. Ensure that you use your full names and not nicknames. Nicknames seem unprofessional.

I. Personal details

Name You repeat your full name and surname here for one reason: In an interview situation, the interviewer will have the CV open on this page, and not on the cover page. This way the interviewer can remember your name.

Preferred Name Especially in cases where you have a name you do not like, or a name that is hard to pronounce, this is important. It brings any potential interviewer closer to you by making you seem a bit more approachable, and (should you have a complicated name) accommodating. In case you have a normal name, just repeat that here. It is not recommended to write down the nicknames that your friends might or might not call you.

Date of Birth and Age This gets two separate entries simple to be accommodation. No one likes calculating how old someone is and getting it wrong. Make sure you update the age as you get older, as it is a potential sign of carelessness, which might catch you out.

Nationality With Namibia having relatively strict laws around immigration and working conditions, not to mention employment equity, it is absolutely crucial to mention whether you are a Namibian or not. Non-Namibians should always be willing to provide a copy of their working visa or permanent residence if they are in possession of one, or alternately disclose the lack thereof immediately. This factor can be a deal breaker, and it is best to play openly there.

Contact Number and Email The potential employer needs to know how to get hold of you in case they want to contact you for an interview. Failure to provide these will simply result in you never being contacted. Worth noting here is to use a professional email address. G-man-stud-84@yahoo.com might seem cool to you, but potential employers might read things into these addresses. petrina.ndjao@gmail.com might seem boring, but is definitely the stronger candidate here.

II. Education and qualifications

Here you list your educational background such as the school you attended, the university where you studied or you are currently studying, exchanges to other universities etc. You should list these chronologically by years and mention the subject you studied/are studying in the different institutions and the highest level and degree you achieved. In older candidates (with >5 years of work experience), it is rather irrelevant (except when changing industries), but in the case of younger people, especially matriculates, it is important to show them highest-first, making any relevant qualification easy to see and assess.

III. Work experience

In this section you list all different kinds of work/employment you had within your last years. List these chronologically by years again. Current or latest employment should be topping the list, as it is most relevant. Make sure to include references for at least the last three up to five positions, in order to display openness and show you have nothing to hide. Applicants with long work histories should probably only elaborate and provide references for the positions that are most relevant to the position that is being applied to. Make sure that you mention everything, even periods of unemployment.

Even work in a shop, bar or restaurant will involve working in a team, providing a quality service to customers, and dealing tactfully with complaints.

Try to relate the skills to the job. A finance job will involve numeracy, analytical and problem solving skills so focus on these whereas for a marketing role you would place a bit more emphasis on persuading and negotiating skills.

IV. Skills and Achievements

The usual ones to mention are linguistic skills and IT knowledge.

Linguistic skills can be separate in speaking, writing and reading skills. You should estimate these on a scale between basic, good and native-language. You can mention any additional diploma you achieved in your language skills such as TOEFL etc. Especially in a country like Namibia, where multiple languages get spoken frequently, it can be a massive selling point to speak more than one language.

Within your IT-skills you should mention knowledge in programs like for example MS Access and Excel etc.. If you have a lot of skills to offer just mention the ones which are relevant for the job/internship etc. you are applying for.

The achievements section is there for showing off some of your career and school highlights. If this list is long, feel free to shorten it down to the relevant ones.

Sometimes it is also important to mention a driving license, if you have one.

V. Interests

There are arguments for and against including them, and we would only really recommend them if they either display a strength of yours (e.g. commitment to learning an instrument can be seen to confirm your willingness to learn) or apply directly to the job (e.g. being an eager stamp collector could show a natural attention to detail that you might need as an electrical engineer). When adding hobbies and interests, be honest! Keep this section short and to the point. As you grow older, your employment record will take precedence and interests will typically diminish greatly in length and importance.

Bullets can be used to separate interests into different types: sporting, creative etc. Hobbies that are a little out of the ordinary can help you to stand out from the crowd: skydiving or mountaineering can show a sense of wanting to stretch yourself and an ability to rely on yourself in demanding situations.

Any interests relevant to the job are worth mentioning: current affairs if you wish to be a journalist; a stock exchange business game if you want to work in finance.

Any evidence of leadership is important to mention: captain or coach of a sports team, course representative, chair of a student society, scout leader: "As captain of the school cricket team, I had to set a positive example, motivate and coach players and think on my feet when making bowling and field position changes, often in tense situations". Anything showing evidence of employability skills such as team working, organizing, planning, persuading, negotiating etc.

C Some good advices for your CV

- Check your spelling and grammar on your CV and let someone else double-check it.
- The CV should not be longer than two Din A4 pages.
- Your CV should be carefully and clearly laid out – not too cramped but not with large empty spaces either. Use bold and italic typefaces for headings and important information.
- Use fonts such as Arial, Cambria, Verdana or Times New Roman in Size ten to eleven. Differentiate between sub-headings and the main text by using underlining and/or bold and bigger font size (e.g. 13 points).
- Include an appropriate application photo in the CV.
- If you print your CV make sure that you use white (high quality) paper.
- If you are posting your CV, do not fold it – put it in a full-size A4 envelope so that it does not arrive creased.
- If you are sending you CV via e-mail put your covering letter as the body of your email. It is wise to format it as plain text as then it can be read by any email reader. Your CV is then sent as an attachment. Say you will send a printed CV if required.
- Use formats as .pdf or .doc for your emailed documents.
- Chop your CV up into easily digestible morsels (bullets, short paragraphs and note form) and give it a clear logical layout, with just the relevant information to make it easy for the selector to read. If you do this, you will have a much greater chance of interview.

If this guide could help you to improve your CV, please visit our page, like it and share it with your friends. Thank you! www.facebook.com/NamCareerService